The Southern PATRIOT

Vol. 16. No. 6 Published by the Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc. June, 1958

School Segregationists Meet Growing Opposition

Dallas Clergy Issues Appeal to Conscience

A statement declaring enforced segregation to be "morally and spiritually wrong" was issued recently by 300 white ministers in Dallas. The schools in Dallas are under court order to desegregate.

The ministers represent 13 denominations. They said the scriptures "call us as Christians to go beyond simple justice to the practice of our Lord's commandments. We must treat every individual as a person made in the image of God . . ."

A group of Dallas rabbis later issued a similar statement supporting desegregation.

Subsequently 330 other white ministers countered these moves by making a public statement opposing integration. However, virtually all of the city's largest and most powerful churches and its most influential ministers were represented in the group supporting desegregation.

The U.S. District Court has set no definite date for Dallas desegregation to begin, and the School Board has thus far refused to make any announcement. However, Dallas NAACP Attorney W. J. Durham has said he believes the board will "show good faith by starting some type of integration policy next fall."

Virginians Organize To Save Public Schools

A tide of decency is rising around the school issue in northern Virginia, where the community of Arlington may soon become one of the testing grounds for southern defiance of the Supreme Court.

Mrs. A. J. E. Davis, SCEF board member in Arlington, reports that sentiment for peaceful compliance with the law is strong there and that people are organizing in an effort to save their public school system.

Arlington is now under court order to begin desegregation of its schools. As the *Patroit* went to press, it was believed that September would be the time. Laws passed by the pro-segregation General Assembly provide for the closing of public schools if Negroes are admitted.

Late this spring a group of Arlington civic, religious and education leaders formed an Organizing Committee to Preserve Our Schools. The committee is made up of people recognized as community leaders and includes members of the League of Women Voters, the American Association of University Women, the Chamber of Commerce, the Ministerial Alliance, the Council of United Church Women, the P.T.A. Council, and several other groups.

In its initial statement, the new committee emphasized that it is "concerned neither with perpetuating segregation nor hastening integration." It is, the statement said, determined to keep the schools open.

P.T.A. On Record

The Arlington County P.T.A. Council had already come out firmly against the closing of the schools in the event of integration.

Meantime, a number of church and civic groups in Arlington and the surrounding area were working steadily to persuade white citizens to view desegregation as not only a legal obligation but as an opportunity and a challenge. They were working also to give Negro parents a feeling of support.

The Arlington Council of United Church Women was giving wide distribution to a recent address by the Rev. J. William Hough, of the Fairfax Methodist Church. In it the minister calls for a "true break-through to brotherhood," which he says requires seeing that "brotherhood does not mean tolerating those who are different from us

(Continued on page 2)

School Round-Up

In this issue, the last until September, The Southern Patriot presents a round-up of some of the hopeful actions being taken by decent law-abiding citizens in Southern communities where early school desegregation is immiment.

In emphasizing this positive side of the picture, we do not underestimate the danger in all these places because of the actions of pro-segregation groups. Vocal and violent minorities could turn any one of these communities into a tinder box when desegregation actually comes. But it is important to know that Southerners who believe in law and order, in right and justice, are also on the move.

These embattled people deserve and must have the support of people of good will everywhere, North and South—and of the Federal Government. For a report on the present state of the clash between Federal and State power in Little Rock, see page 2.

Charlottesville Holds Danger — And Hope

The situation is "grave" in Charlottesville, Va., where school desegregation is scheduled to begin in September, but strong forces in the community are at work to bring about peaceful compliance with the law.

This is reported by Mrs. Sarah Patton Boyle, SCEF board member in that city.

The danger, Mrs. Boyle said, lies in the fact that Charlottesville has a powerful chapter of the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties (statewide pro-segregation group in Virginia) and also of the Seaboard Citizens. The latter group was organized by John Kasper who paid the community three visits.

But Charlottesville also has a powerful branch of the NAACP and an active chapter of the Virginia Council on Human Relations.

The Council has been working for almost two years to create a climate of public opinion favorable to desegregation. It has held public meetings each month with distinguished speakers and open discussion. It recently presented a series of six weekly half-hour radio talks and distributed copies of them to key people in the community. It is urging the City Council to appoint a bi-racial commission to study community problems.

The League of Women Voters and the Charlottesville Council of Church Women are standing firmly for law and order, justice and fair play—although neither has defended integration as such, Mrs. Boyle said. About 85 to 90 per cent of the community's white ministers are believed to be personally liberal, and about

(Continued on page 3)

Ashmore Says Washington Deserted Little Rock

As schools closed for the year, one of the big question marks on the Southern scene was what would happen in Little Rock when they reopened in the fall.

There has never been any Federal prosecution of those who inspired mob action there last year. One of the best recent summaries of the Little Rock situation was a Nieman Lecture at Harvard University by Arkansas Gazette Editor Harry Ashmore. Excerpts follow:

". . . During those fall days the embattled Little Rock School Board . . . waited for the Federals to ride to their aid. All they got, as it turned out, was a withdrawal of the regulars of the 101st and a perfunctory guard detail of federalized national guardsmen under orders to observe what went on in the school but not to arrest any malefactors within . . .

"It soon became apparent that this was far from enough to preserve any semblance of order. The mob which once came close to forcing entry into the school did not re-form, it is true, but it didn't need to. A far safer course was to inspire a small group of white students to undertake a campaign of harassment against the isolated Negroes. And as it became apparent that Washington had done all it was going to do, the Citizens Councils became bolder and bolder in their campaign of intimidation, coercion, and boycott . . .

". . . In Washington, the decision to leave to the Little Rock School Board the entire burden of carrying out the court order against impossible odds has never been officially announced, in these terms, but has been clearly acknowledged by the Department of Justice. The new Attorney General, Mr. Rogers, said that there were no present plans for further legal action in Little Rock.

"He further noted that the administration had no plans for pressing for additional civil rights legislation at this session of Congress—a matter of some moment since the Justice Department had previously used as an excuse for inaction at Little Rock the failure of Congress to enact the enforcement provisions in the last civil rights bill.

"These pronouncements were followed by one of the most remarkable scenes enacted on Capitol Hill since adoption of the Missouri Compromise. Mr. Rogers appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee to be interrogated as to his fitness as Attorney General, received cordial greetings, and was recommended for confirmation without a single question being addressed to him regarding his past or future course in the Little Rock case—and this before a committee that counts among its members Senators Eastland, of Mississippi, and Johnston of South Carolina.

"This singular occurrence was accorded no more than a passing mention in the press and no one of consequence speculated in print or on a television tube as to the dimensions of what must have been one of the most remarkable political deals in recent years.

"Just as the Little Rock story did not begin in Little Rock, it will not end there . . . These events have already had tragic consequences in Arkansas and the South; those who were disposed to support an orderly adjustment to the new public policy have been discredited and disarmed—not so much by the extremists who are now in control, as by a national administration which deserted them in the first collision between Federal and State force . . .

". . . it seems to me that the American people are still not aware of what Little Rock really demonstrated—that not only did the administration have no plan to meet the crisis when it came, but even now, with all the bitter lessons before it, still has charted no effective course of action nor displayed any disposition to do so . . ."

Arlington Rallies for Law and Order

(Continued from page 1)

but . . . accepting them on an equal footing in the ongoing stream of life."

The church women were also distributing copies of resolutions adopted by the Virginia Council of United Church Women in February asking the state to follow a course of "reconciliation" instead of "massive resistance." Local committees in some churches were scheduling meetings to discuss the school crisis.

Interracial Groups Active

Also at work were such interracial groups as the Community Council for Social Progress in Arlington, sponsored by the Unitarian Church but drawing support from the community at large, and the nearby 300-member Fairfax County Council on Human Relations, affiliated with the Southern Regional Council. These organizations have been working toward better race relations over a period of years and have carried on action as well as public information programs against discrimination. A Council on Human Relations was also organized recently in nearby Alexandria.

Nobody was writing off the danger from noisy pro-segregation groups, but there is every indication that these groups no longer speak for the majority of white people in northern Virginia—if they ever did.

The Virginia NAACP points out that in this section there are interracial Girl Scout troops, an interracial Vacation Bible School, federations of white and colored P.T.A. and Citizens Associations. The change that has come in public sentiment in Arlington was perhaps dramatized the first week in May when the Nauk Civic Association, a Negro group, applied for membership in the Arlington Civic Federation.

A few years ago when it was suggested quietly that the Nauk group be admitted to membership, the president of the Federation threatened to fight it on the floor and the general opposition was so great that the proposal was dropped. This year the vote for admission was 51 to 7. When the results of the vote were announced, the meeting burst into a round of applause.

Louisiana Bill Opposed

Pending legislation to close the public schools of Louisiana in the event of integration was opposed in an open letter sent by SCEF to all state officials and members of the state legislature.

The letter said "destruction of the public schools is an invitation to chaos" and pointed to what has already happened in Mississippi where repeal of the compulsory school attendance law is blamed by many for 44 per cent increase in juvenile delinquency the following year.

Texas Voices Speak

A recent convention of the Young Democratic Clubs of Texas censured the state Legislature for its adoption of new segregation laws, which the Young Democrats described as attempts to "illegally circumvent the Constitution of the United States as interpreted by the Supreme Court."

* * *

Students at Weslaco High School in South Texas have voted Leon Jackson, Negro football player, as the most popular boy in the school. More than 500 students in the ninth through 12th grades took part in the election.

We Recommend

THE LANGSTON HUGHES READER, GEORGE BRAZILLER, Inc. New York, $5.95

Excerpts from the writing of one of America's most authentic voices. Included are selections from the author's novels, poems, plays, stories, and autobiographical material. This is really three or four books in one.

THE DEMOCRATIC MAN, Selected Writings of EDUARD C. LINDEMAN, edited by ROBERT GESSNER, Beacon Press, $5.00

Ed Lindeman's first teaching assignment was at the North Carolina College for Women at Greensboro, but he was dismissed by the president under pressure from the KKK.

Because he spent most of his professional life as a professor at the New York School of Social Work, Lindeman probably is best known by social workers, but he was one of America's most sought after platform speakers, and community consultants, and numbered his friends by the thousands, many of whom will want to have this volume preserving much of the wisdom and wit of one of our nation's teachers. He himself was one of the finest embodiments of the title of this book.

DESEGREGATION AND THE LAW, by ALBERT P. BLAUSTEIN and CLARENCE CLYDE FERGUSON, JR., Rutgers University Press, $5.00

The two decrees of the United States Supreme Court in **Brown v Board of Education**, the school segregation cases, have had a profound effect upon the life of this nation, and their impact has just begun. To understand the background, history and full implications of these momentous decisions, there is no better aid than this book.

EPITAPH FOR DIXIE, by HARRY S. ASHMORE, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, $3.50.

An important book. After reading it you will understand why Little Rock's Ashmore is one major reason why it is possible to be hopeful, even optimistic, about that beleagured city.

WITH ALL DELIBERATE SPEED, Segregation—Desegregation in Southern Schools, edited by DON SHOEMAKER, Harper & Brothers, New York, $3.50.

The best factual summary of what happened during the first three years under the Supreme Court decisions, written by the staff of the Southern Educational Reporting Service.

BLACK BOURGEOISIE, The Rise of a New Middle Class in the United States, by E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER, The Free Press Glencoe, Ill., $4.00

Dr. Frazier, Chairman of the Department of Sociology, Howard University, is one of the world's foremost social scientists. This is an important study and, as with all of Dr. Frazier's books, reading it is a rewarding experience for those who seek a better understanding of Negro-white community relations.

TWO INVESTIGATORS for the Eastland Committee, center and right, read the words of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" as others sing the anthem at Conference on Voting Restrictions, held in Washington on April 27. The words were on the back of the Conference program, which had on the front a map showing states in which Negroes are deprived of their basic rights—among them Mississippi. Immediately after the singing, the Eastland investigators heard Father John LaBauve of Mound Bayou describe voting restrictions in Mississippi. Speaking of those opposing civil rights for Negroes, the priest said: "They feel their traditions are too dear to give up without a fight. They are going to get a fight."

Charlottesville Prepares to Meet Crisis

(Continued from page 1)

two-thirds are known to be. Several of them have outspokenly confronted their congregations with the segregation question as a Christian issue.

And yet, as always, the greatest burden of the desegregation struggle will probably fall on the Negro children. Anticipating this, the NAACP in Charlottesville is planning a week-long workshop in June to help these children prepare for whatever ordeals lie ahead.

For the younger children, there will be skits and stories and films designed to give them confidence and patterns of correct behavior, Mrs. Boyle said. For the older children, there will also be frank discussion of the issues. The American Friends Service Committee has been asked to help with the workshop, and it is anticipated that there will be 15 or 20 teachers and discussion leaders working with the children during the week. All of the community's Negro churches are cooperating.

From Tidewater, Virginia, SCEF Board Member W. Hale Thompson reports that some beginnings toward building public opinion for desegregation have been started by an interracial group, the Peninsula Council for Community Cooperation in Newport News and by the Unitarian Church in Norfolk.

However, the real job of rallying the people of these communities around a forward-looking program still lies ahead, Thompson said. He predicts further legal maneuvering and delaying tactics before desegregation actually begins.